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Lifting the Weight: Understanding Depression in Men, Its Causes and Solutions

Martin Kantor MD

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Depression in men often goes undiagnosed or improperly treated because of unique qualities that make it different from depression in women. In this volume, Dr. Kantor explains that depression in men is not strictly the product of major life events; it also regularly appears in response to minor troubling issues that often go entirely overlooked by others or, if recognized at all, are downplayed. In this jargon-free text, Kantor explains how many men are able to navigate the big stresses successfully only to succumb to the little ones. And he challenges the current widespread tendency now viewing depression in men as a strictly biological event to be treated first and foremost with pharmaceuticals.

Psychiatrist Martin Kantor takes us into his treatment rooms and daily experience to show the signs and causes of depression in men, and how they do not display the disorder most often in the way we typically associate with depression. Many men who feel depressed deny it by shifting into hypomania. Trying to hide, reject or downplay the feeling, they may become excessively elated, have a decreased need for sleep, find their thoughts racing and their sexual desire fueled out of control. Where there was, initially with depression, a withdrawal and a desire to weep, then enters attention-seeking behavior, clowning and flighty energy, explains Kantor. That makes the depression far more difficult for laypeople and professionals?even for the men themselves?to recognize and deal with. That is unfortunate because a small amount of medical attention and personal affection can work wonders, rechanneling the man into a life of happiness he might never have known, and a level of achievement he might never othewise have attained, says Kantor

Long thought to be a feminine disorder connected to hormones and the premenstrual syndrome, depression actually strikes millions of men each year. With absorbing vignettes, and insights into a faulty culture that urges men to always have a stiff upper lip and shun medical attention, Dr. Kantor shows the unique ways in which depression is very much a men's disorder. And he helps us understand what we can do to treat it, to help ourselves and the men we care about recover.

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